

325.73 John Reynolds (1788-1865)

R335L

Letter of the Hon. J.

Reynolds, of Illinois, to his
Constituents, City of Washing-
ton, June [25] 1840.

[re-immigrants & sisters]

1771

1772

LETTER

OF

THE HON. J. REYNOLDS OF ILLINOIS,

TO

HIS CONSTITUENTS.

CITY OF WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1840.

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LETTER OF THE HON. J. BEYNOLDS OF ILLINOIS.

TO MY CONSTITUENTS.

This session of Congress is likely to be so much protracted beyond the usual time of adjournment, that I fear I shall not soon have the pleasure to see you, and render to you an account of my public conduct. On this consideration, I deem it my duty to correspond with you frankly and freely on all important measures that come before Congress.

It is well known to you, that two parties exist in Congress as well as throughout the Union. These parties are firm and stable in their political doctrines, and at the same time are based on very different principles. They are both very decided and firm in carrying out the principles and the measures on which each party is founded. The party in opposition to Democratic principles, in and out of Congress, have presented to Congress two very important measures, to which I am utterly opposed. One is, to circumscribe, or repeal the naturalization laws, and thereby to deprive foreigners of the benefits and blessings of our free Government. The other is to preclude the Government officers from exercising their privileges like other citizens in matters relating to elections. These measures seem to me to be extremely important, so that I consider it to be my duty to present them to you for your consideration.

You will readily bring to your recollection, that the "alien and sedition" laws of 1798, enacted under the Administration of John Adams by the Federal party, formed much of the basis of the political contest of that day between the two parties. The investigation and arguments against these laws are recorded in the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798 and '99, and in Mr. Madison's report. They afford us the great landmarks of the parties of that day, and which, in my judgment, have been substantially revived in the two measures above mentioned.

In order that I may not be mistaken in these matters, and to submit the whole for your judgment and consideration, I will present to you the "alien and sedition laws" of 1793, and some of the petitions and bills of the present day, so that you will be the better able to judge on them correctly, and see that the measures are substantially the same.

"AN ACT CONCERNING ALIENS.

"And be it enacted, &c. That it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, at any time during the continuance of this act, to order all such aliens as he shall judge dangerous

to the peace and safety of the United States, or shall have reasonable grounds to suspect are concerned in any treasonable or secret machinations against the Government thereof, to part out of the territory of the United States, within such time as shall be expressed in such order; which order shall be served on such alien by delivering him a copy thereof, or leaving the same at his usual abode, and returned to the office of the Secretary of State, by the marshal, or other person whom the same shall be directed. And in case any alien so ordered to depart, shall be found at large within the United States after the time limited in such order for his departure, and not having obtained a license from the President to reside therein, or having obtained such license, shall not have conformed thereto, every such alien shall, on conviction thereof, be imprisoned for a term not exceeding three years, and shall never after be admitted to become a citizen of the United States.

"Approved, June 25, 1798."

(In force for two years.)

Second section of the Sedition law of 1798:

"And be it further enacted, That if any person shall write, print, utter, or publish, or shall cause or procure to be written, printed, uttered, or published, or shall, knowingly and willingly assist or aid in writing, printing, uttering, or publishing, any false, scandalous, and malicious writing or writings, against the Government of the United States, or either House of the Congress of the United States, or the President of the United States, with intent to defame the said Government, or either House of the said Congress, or the said President, or to bring them, or either of them, into contempt or disrepute, or to excite against them, or either or any of them, the hatred of the good people of the United States, or to stir up sedition within the United States; or to excite any unlawful combinations therein, for opposing or resisting any law of the United States, or any act of the President of the United States, done in pursuance of any such law, or of the powers in him vested by the Constitution of the United States; or to resist, oppose, or defeat, any such law or act; or to aid, encourage, or abet, any hostile designs of any foreign nation against the United States, their people, or Government, then such person, being thereof convicted before any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall be punished by a fine not exceeding two thousand dollars, and by imprisonment not exceeding two years.

"Approved, July 14, 1798."

(To be in force until the 3d March, 1801.)

Petition from Illinois, presented to the House of Representatives on the 6th of February, 1840, by the honorable Mr. Stuart, Representative in Congress from Illinois, and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

"To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

"FELLOW-CITIZENS: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the United States, and of the State of Illinois, respectfully shows their belief, that time has fulfilled the object had in view by our fathers at the period of adopting the Constitution, when they gave the Congress the power of passing laws for the naturalization of foreigners; and your petitioners also show their belief, that the farther admission of foreigners to a participation in the political rights of native Americans, would be hurtful to the interest of our country, and if continued will, sooner or later, prove destructive to our Republican institutions. Your petitioners, therefore, ask the attention of your honorable body to the various petitions for a repeal of the naturalization laws, which have been formerly presented to your honorable body; and they farther ask your honorable body to repeal entirely

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the laws which now exist in regard to the naturalization of foreigners.

Copy of the bill presented in the Senate by Mr. Crittenden:

A BILL to prevent the interposition of certain Federal officers in elections.

To the end that the great powers given to the officers of the Federal Government, and other persons employed in its service, may not be used for the influencing of elections, which ought to be free and incorrupt—

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the first day of April, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine, no marshal or deputy marshal, no postmaster or deputy postmaster, no receiver or register of a land office, or any of their deputies or clerks, no surveyor general of the public lands, or any of his deputies or assistants, no collector, surveyor, naval officer, weigher, gauger, appraiser, or other officer or person whatsoever concerned or employed in the charging, collecting, levying, or managing the customs, or any branch or part thereof, no engineer, officer, or agent employed or concerned in the execution or superintendence of any of the public works, shall, by word, message, or writing, or in any other manner, whatsoever, endeavor to persuade any elector to give, or dissuade any elector from giving, his vote for the choice of any person to be elector of President and Vice President of these United States, or for the choice of any person to be a Senator or Representative in the Congress of the said United States, or for the choice of any person to be Governor or Lieutenant Governor of any State, or of any person to be a Representative or member in the Legislative Department of any State of this Union, or for the choice of any person to serve in any public office established by the law of any said States; nor shall any such officer or person intermeddle in any of the elections above mentioned, or use any means with intent to influence or control the same, otherwise than by giving his own vote; and every person offending therein shall forfeit the sum of five hundred dollars; one moiety thereof to the informer, and the other moiety thereof to the United States aforesaid, to be recovered, with costs of suit, by any person that shall sue for the same, by action of debt, bill, or plaint in any of the district or circuit courts of the United States; and every person convicted, on any such suit, of the said offence, shall thereby become disabled and incapable of ever bearing or executing any office or place of trust whatsoever under the said United States.

I will lay before you the first section of the following bill, presented in the House of Representatives by Mr. Bell, which contains the subject I wish to present to you.

A BILL to secure the freedom of elections, and to provide more effectually for the faithful administration of Executive patronage.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the first day of July next, no officer, agent, or contractor, or other person holding any office or employment of trust or profit under the Constitution and laws of the United States, shall, by the contribution of money or other valuable thing, or by the use of the franking privilege, or the abuse of any other official privilege or function, or by threats and menaces, or in any other manner, intermeddle with the election of any member or members of either House of Congress, or of the President or Vice President of the United States, or of the Governor or other officer of any State, or of any member or members of the Legislature of any State; and every such officer or other person offending therein, shall be held to be guilty of a high misdemeanor; and upon conviction in any court of the United States having jurisdiction thereof, shall pay a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars. *Provided,* That nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to interfere with the right of suffrage, as secured by the Constitution; *And provided further,* That nothing herein contained shall so operate as to prevent the President, or the head of any Department who is vested by law with the power of appointing inferior officers, from removing from office, at any time, any incumbent who the President or the head of a Department, as the case may be, shall be satisfied has intermeddled in any election, State or Federal.

The same party that enacted the "alien and sedition" laws, had been in existence, and actively employed, long before the passage of the acts. They had urged on the consideration of the convention that formed the Constitution of United States, the propriety of establishing a Senate and President for life, the appointment by the General Government of the Governors of the States, and a veto on State laws.

These facts are stated not to disturb the ashes of the illustrious dead, but to enable you, my constituents, to judge for yourselves on the merit of those two great contending parties. Many of the leaders of this party had been the most active and efficient in achieving our Revolution: and for this we honor and respect them. For their political opinions we also entertain a becoming respect: but at the same time are satisfied, they were in a most egregious error.

This was not at all surprising. The most wise and best men might have been mistaken at that day. There was no practical form of free Government before them for a model, and they had been for many years experiencing and observing the system and forms of the British Government. It was natural for them, without the light of experience to guide them, to adopt much of the principles of that Government. Now it is different. At this day, to adopt the policy of the British Government, is sinning with experience, light, and knowledge, before your eyes.

These two acts, the alien and sedition laws, more than any other, gave rise to that celebrated political contest, which resulted in the election of Thomas Jefferson and the overthrow of the Federal party. On the downfall of this party, was raised the Democratic church, which has, since its first erection, withstood the shocks of all its enemies, and I hope will "flourish in immortal youth." It requires not a philosopher, or a divine, or even a lawyer, to see at once that the two measures in regard to the aliens are substantially the same. In one case, the President could order any "suspected" alien out of the country. In the other, case in the petition, aliens are suspected in the first instance, and are not permitted to come into the country.

One case, to drive off—the other, not to let come, must substantially be the same policy. In both, it was war and death to aliens.

These resolutions of Virginia and Kentucky, and Mr. Madison's report against the "Alien and Sedition" laws, had not alone the sanction of the very great and wise men who presented them to the public, but they were also approved by the Legislatures of Virginia and Kentucky, and afterwards by a majority likewise of the American people. This last decision was one of no ordinary character. The American people throughout the Union had the subject of the "Alien and Sedition" laws before them in discussion for a long time in the canvass for the Presidency; and after a fair and impartial trial, the decision was solemnly pronounced by a large majority of the people, that the principles on which these acts were founded were not only unconstitutional, but also that they were calculated to ruin and prostrate our free institutions, and introduce a monarchy.

This signal defeat and condemnation of the Federal party, did not change the sentiments of the party. This fact is incontrovertibly established by the general and deep rooted hatred which the leaders of the party entertain at this time towards Mr. Jefferson and the Republican party of that day.

The abovementioned petition has to it about two hundred and fifty-six signers, and seems to have been forwarded from Chicago, in the State of Illi-

nois, to Mr. Stuart, in this city. It is now in possession of the Committee on the Judiciary.

I have presented more particularly this petition to you, as I was truly astonished that the doctrines of the old alien law were about to be revived in the State of Illinois; and I have no doubt you will be as much surprised as I am, to see the efforts making throughout the Union to revive this condemned policy.

The above petition is not the only one presented to Congress during this and the former sessions, on the subject of the naturalization laws. There are so many presented from different parts of the Union, that it seems to be a concerted attack on foreigners, and a settled determination to circumscribe, or prevent entirely, the future naturalization of aliens. This opinion is strengthened by the course of policy observed in the two great States of New York and Pennsylvania. The last General Assembly of the State of New York, when it was under the domination of the Federal party, enacted a registration law for the city of New York. This act imposes on the people of that city more trouble and more labor than is required in any other section of the State, to enable them to exercise the privilege of voting. The same policy was adopted by Governor Ritner and party, when they were in power in the State of Pennsylvania, in regard to the city of Philadelphia. The Democratic party, under the administration of Governor Porter, repealed the registration laws, and the State is once more free from this Federal yoke of bondage. These laws, requiring registration before a free man can exercise his sovereign privilege of voting, seems not only unjust and oppressive, but likewise unconstitutional. It is contrary to the spirit of our institutions to make this invidious distinction between one section of the same State and another, and that, too, to punish foreigners, who are legally naturalized. If the Legislature has this power, they can make a property qualification, or any other they please, so that a foreigner, or a poor man, may be entirely excluded from voting.

Societies are formed in many of the cities in the Union expressly for the purpose of obtaining from Congress the repeal of all the naturalization laws, and in future to prevent foreigners from participating in our free institutions.

I have before me an address of a committee of upwards of one hundred names, which is made to "the citizens of Louisiana and the inhabitants of the United States." This is from the "Louisiana Native American Association."

I will lay before you a few extracts from this address, to exhibit to you the temper and feelings of that society:

"In ancient times a Roman citizen was a title of honor, and a passport throughout the world; but if our naturalization laws and their concomitants continue much longer, the name of an American citizen will become a by-word—a scorn—a hissing, and a reproach throughout all the nations of the earth."

In the same page, 18, the committee say:

"We will now conclude this address by declaring it as our solemn and unalterable determination never to abandon this great and holy cause—never

to suspend our efforts, until the naturalization laws are repealed."

"The present Executive of the State of New York, Governor Seward, in his inaugural message, says: 'There is another resource which is ours, neither by inheritance nor by purchase, nor by violence nor by fraud. It is the labor, the incalculable labor of the European States.' The truth of this statement every native American is proud to admit; it is, indeed, by their labor, and by that only, that foreigners render any service to the United States; and it is the duty, as it is the just prerogative of the American people, to confine them to this, their only proper vocation in our country."

It is startling to a patriot to see such sentiments seriously and solemnly promulgated from a whole "association" of men. It is founded on the old Federal doctrine of "gentlemen and simple men"—one class to work, and the others to enjoy it. The sentiment of the Whig Governor of New York is seized upon by the address as a delicious morsel.

It is much worse than the alien law—there is something noble in that, in comparison with this sentiment. Under the alien act, if the President did not think it right to retain a foreigner, he could order him out of the country. This provision would retain foreigners amongst us, to work for us like cattle or negroes, which the address says is "their only proper vocation in the country." Is this the sentiment of liberty and freedom? or is this the glorious sentiment, that "all men are born free and equal," which we find in the Declaration of Independence? These suggestions are left for your decision.

I would ask my constituents if this be not a kind of holy war against foreigners. In the 19th page of the same work, the committee are preparing for death or victory. They say:

"If America has reared temples and altars to liberty, and she requires victims, we are prepared for the sacrifice."

This reminds me of the story of the masquito on the stern of a steamboat going up the Mississippi—it said, "Lord! how I make his boat go." I will close these extracts with the following:

"Their united voice must and will be heard, and responded to by Congress—we must and will be protected from foreign influence by a cessation of indiscriminate immigration and naturalization of foreigners."

From these extracts we can readily see the temper of this society—they breathe vengeance and slaughter against aliens.

Judging from the expressions of this address—from the acts of the States of Pennsylvania and New York, and from the various petitions presented to Congress, we are forced to believe that a party throughout the Union are determined to repeal all naturalization laws, and preclude any further emigration of foreigners to our country.

To alter and change this policy, which has done so much good to the country in every respect, in my opinion, is to strike a deadly blow at our prosperity itself.

No country on the globe has equalled in the same time the rapid increase of population, the prosperity and happiness of the people, which have been experienced in the United States since

its independence. This unparalleled advance of the Government on the great scale of nations was increased and insured in no small degree by the wise and patriotic laws naturalizing foreigners. A great portion of the territory forming the United States, which extends across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, and from the Gulf of Mexico, far beyond the sources of the Mississippi, would remain for ages a wilderness, without inhabitants, was it not for the great immigration of hardy and enterprising foreigners. In comparison to the antiquity of the nations of Europe were all "new comers" in the United States. We are of recent growth ourselves. It is a short time in relation to the long existence of other nations, since the first pilgrims landed at Plymouth, and it is short indeed as to other nations, since we declared our independence. Would it not be cruel to exclude a Frenchman from the enjoyment of the same liberty and independence, which his nation so signally assisted us in obtaining in the Revolution? Could we deny the descendants of Lafayette a place among us? The same may be said of almost of all the nations of Europe; for most them assisted us in our Revolution with either men or money. Who could reconcile it to his conscience to exclude from our country an Emmett, who had witnessed the flower of his own countrymen fall, not a few, but in masses in, their noble struggle for freedom; and he himself, on account of his free principles, was forced to become an exile. Under these circumstances, who would deny Emmett a resting place in our land?

The same may be said of thousands and thousands of other emigrants from Europe, that fled from the tyranny and oppression of the old world to seek liberty and freedom in the new.

It would be extremely unwise, and injurious to us, to exclude the prudent, laborious, and patriotic Germans, and others of the same honest cast and deportment, from our borders. Moreover, it would be unjust and oppressive to retain them in our own country, tax their property, make them work on roads, &c. and then not permit them to enjoy all the blessings of a free Government.

Some of these emigrants may annoy the exquisite sensibilities of the long haired dandies in our large cities; but the foreigners will soon find it to their advantage to retire back in the country, and there make good farmers or mechanics.

This country presents to man the only free Government on earth; and one party are making attempts to prevent those that are ground to the dust by the tyranny and oppression of other Governments, from enjoying the blessings of our "free institutions." It does seem to me that our independence and Government were not exclusively established for those that were in it at the time, but that it was created, under the guidance of the great Architect of Nations, for the oppressed of all climes and countries, who would conform to our laws and institutions; and, in "the full tide of successful experiment," and in the days of mental and other improvements in the condition of man, one party in the United States is disposed, by rigid enactments of laws, to exclude from our borders all foreigners, no matter how intelligent, how honest,

or how much oppressed they may be. The intelligent and generous people of the United States will never consent to such illiberal policy. For my own part, I would much rather shorten than prolong the time in which to naturalize foreigners. I will therefore support the bill which is now before the House of Representatives, to reduce the time, with proper guards, to two years.

Permit me, before I close this branch of the subject, to lay before you the 9th resolution, adopted in the late Democratic convention at Baltimore. This expression of the sentiments of the Democratic party, throughout the Union, will be found in the proceedings of the convention of the 6th May, and is honorable to the hearts and heads of the party that will continue this wise and venerable creed of the Democratic church of '93:

"9. *Resolved*, That the liberal principles embodied by Jefferson in the Declaration of Independence, and sanctioned in the Constitution, which make ours the land of liberty, and the asylum of the oppressed of every nation; have ever been cardinal principles in the Democratic faith; and every attempt to abridge the present privilege of becoming citizens, and the owners of soil among us, ought to be resisted, with the same spirit which swept the alien and sedition laws from our statute book."

THE SEDITION ACT.

On giving these two measures, the bills recently introduced to Congress, and the "sedition law," a fair and equitable comparison, the Constitution is, in my opinion, more palpably violated by these bills, than by the "sedition" act itself. One bill states, "or person intermeddle in any of the elections above mentioned, or use any means with intent to influence or control the same." The other holds this language, "or in any other manner intermeddle with the elections of," &c. Those expressions most manifestly show that no officer was to speak or write any thing in relation to an election. This is much worse than the sedition law; that only prohibited falsehood from being published; this prohibits the truth as well as falsehood. According to the provisions in these bills, all Federal officers were disfranchised, and their rights and privileges as American citizens were torn from them.

I conceive it neither gives man more or less rights as a citizen, to appoint him an officer under the United States Government. He is still an American citizen, which is, in my opinion, nature's nobleman.

The Constitution of the United States contains this most essential and wise provision in the first article of the amendments: that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press," &c.

It would seem to me, that all mankind would come to the same conclusion at once on this subject, that the provisions contained in these bills were palpable infractions of the Constitution.

I will introduce to you some extracts from the Virginia resolutions of '98, and from Mr. Madison's report, that establish the unconstitutionality of the Alien and Sedition laws, and also will condemn, in an eminent degree, their kindred measures recently introduced into Congress.

Extract from the Virginia resolutions, drawn by Mr. Madison.

"That the General Assembly doth particularly protest against the palpable and alarming infractions of the Constitution in the two last cases of the 'Alien and Sedition acts' passed at the last session of Congress; the first of which exercises a

power no where delegated to the Federal Government, and which, by uniting Legislative and Judicial powers to those of Executive, subverts the general principles of free Government, as well as the particular organization and positive provisions of the Federal Constitution; and the other of which acts exercises in like manner a power not delegated by the Constitution; but, on the contrary, expressly and positively forbidden by one of the amendments thereto—a power which, more than any other, ought to produce universal alarm, because it is levelled against the right of freely examining public characters and measures, and of free communication among the people thereon, which has ever been justly deemed the only effectual guardian of every other right.”

If the “sedition” act of 1798 ought to “produce universal alarm” at that day, what ought the same measures, contained in these bills, “produce” at this day, when our rights are much better understood? The conclusion must be “universal alarm.” One bill was introduced into the Senate, and the other into the House, at two different sessions of Congress, with some slight alterations. These moves in both Houses of Congress, show a determined and systematic plan of operation to carry this favorite measure, and to deprive one class of our citizens of their rights of speech and of the press, while the other measure, the repeal of the naturalization law, would exclude the further admission of all classes of foreigners from our country.

Mr. Madison, in his report on the Virginia resolutions, speaking of the act of ratification of the Constitution of the United States by the convention of Virginia, uses this strong language:

“There is an express and solemn declaration by the convention of the State, that they ratify the Constitution in the sense, that no right of any denomination can be cancelled, abridged, restrained, or modified, by the Government of the United States, or any part of it, except in those instances in which power is given by the Constitution, and in the sense particularly, that among other essential rights, the liberty of conscience and freedom of the press cannot be cancelled, abridged, restrained, or modified by any authority of the United States.”

It is evident, from this view of the Constitution, that no person, let him be officer or not, can be, by an act of Congress, denied the use of the press or of speech.

These recent measures are also most evidently wrong in principle, as well as they are unconstitutional. It would be unnatural and unjust to restrain an officer, more than another individual, from defending himself when he is attacked. Self-defence is the first law of nature. No law ought to be made to abridge or cancel this right. In what situation would a Federal officer be placed, supposing him to be a candidate, and attacked? Right or wrong, he must be silent, or he would incur the penalty of the law, if these bills had passed. We then would see, what I never have seen, a *dumb candidate*. I can see nothing in an officer so criminal in discussing the affairs of his country like other persons. State officers might as well be prevented as Federal. Who ever heard of a State or Federal officer having a padlock to his mouth? The honor of the invention is due to the Federal party of '98. There are more office seekers than office holders.

If this advantage were given to the *outs*, together with their superior numbers, it would be death to the *ins*, if they were not permitted to defend themselves.

The “alien and sedition” laws were enacted by the Federal party when they were in power. The object of the party by the sedition law, was to re-

strain the people from operating on them and their Government. Now it is reversed. The Opposition party are in the minority, and by their movements are seeking to restrain the officers of the Government from exercising their privileges in the elections. Change of situation has made it necessary to change the legislation also. Now they wish to restrain the officers, and in former times they restrained the people. The general object seems to be the same—to establish the principles of the “alien and sedition” laws, and on these principles to raise themselves into power on the ruins of Democracy.

It is just to state that not all the members of the Opposition party sustained in the House the bill which was rejected on the 20th May last; and it is also proper to state that not one of the Democratic party voted for it. It is for you to say if these principles of the “alien and sedition law,” whose quietus was administered to it in 1800, is now again to be revived, and made the basis of the new Harrison administration of the Government. Are foreigners to be excluded, and Federal officers gagged? And for what? Is it to establish the old Federal doctrines of the “alien and sedition law?” The “sedition law,” during the present session of Congress, received by both Houses of Congress another public condemnation, in the case of the heirs of the Hon. Matthew Lyon, deceased. A bill passed Congress refunding to the heirs \$1,060 96 cents, with interest since 1799, for a fine imposed on Mr. Lyon for a breach of the “sedition law.” Thus it is that this odious gag law is yet held in utter contempt by the Congress of the American people.

The Opposition party, besides attempting to prevent the officers of the General Government from meddling in elections, charge the whole Democratic party as “the office holders” party, “the spoils party,” etc. These charges they disregard themselves, when they are in power. When Governor Ritner and party came into power in Pennsylvania, the Democrats were dismissed from office without ceremony. They were forced into the ranks of private citizens with a vengeance.

The same course was pursued in the State of New York. I will lay before you an article from the Albany Argus, to show that the Opposition party in that State have no dislike to the “spoils,” when they have the power to obtain them.

From the Albany Argus of May 20.
THE “SPOILS PARTY.”

This was the *soubriquet* applied to the Democratic party by the present dominant Federal party in this State; and always accompanied by an expression of marked horror at the alleged doctrine of the “spoils.” This was before their accession to power; and if they were to be believed, nothing could be more detestable, in their opinion, than the practice of the Democratic party to appoint a majority of their friends (it was by no means universal) to office.

If the practice were detestable, what shall we think of the hypocrisy and insincerity which declaim against it, as such, and yet, the moment the power is within their grasp, adopt it, to an extent far exceeding the practice of any party in this country.

Let us judge, by practical tests, who are emphatically the “spoils” party.

Every Democrat within the reach of the Federal axe has been struck from office. Not a man has been spared. The removals and appointments, of party friends exclusively, have been pushed to an extent unknown in the history of parties here or elsewhere. And this by a party professing the utmost disinterestedness of object, and a profound abhorrence of the “spoils” of office!

Within little more than a year the Federal party of this State, under the direction of the Albany Junta, have removed and appointed **SEVEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-ONE CIVIL OFFICERS**, viz:—

County Judges	48	Ins. of beef and pork	27
Com. of Loans	111	Justice of Peace	9
Sheriffs	31	Measurers of Grain	17
Flour inspectors	5	Cullers of Staves	5
Inspectors of sole leather	21	Weghers of merchandize	9
Commissioners of deeds	56	Health officer	1
Masters in Chancery	78	Clerk of State prison	1
Examiners in do	61	Port wardens	5
Supreme Court Com.	42	Harbor master	1
Inspectors of Lumber	30	Inspectors of distilled spirits	8
do pot and pearl ashes	3	Measurers of Stone	3
do green hides, &c.	5	do of wood	5
do State prison	4	Commissioners of Lewiston	2
do salt	1	school fund	2
Superintend'ts on salt works	2	Bank commissioner	1
Assistant State sealer	1	Health commissioner	1
Canal Commissioners	5	Inspector of flax seed	1
Canal appraisers	3	Ag't for Onondaga Indians	1
Bank directors	2	Resident physician	1
Notaries Public	88		

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This is the "spoils doctrine" to an extent never before witnessed in this State—and probably in any other American State.

But this is not all. The offices in existence when this party of all the abhorrence of the "spoils" came into power, were not sufficient for their voracity of appetite and to satisfy the craving of the hungry "spoil hunters" that literally besieged the Capitol. It became necessary to meet the demand for office, and to avoid actual outbreaks from the discontents of the disappointed, to manufacture a new supply. It became necessary to create new offices not desired by the public wants, nor demanded by the people but required as bays and rewards for the ravenous crew that came up in swarms to touch and taste the "spoils."

During the late session of the Legislature, upwards of **THREE HUNDRED NEW OFFICES** were created or proposed to be created by the Federal partisans in power—the honest partisans who entertain so sincere an abhorrence of the "spoils." They have been enumerated as follows:

- 5 chancellors.
- 2 vice-chancellors.
- 1 bank commissioner.
- 2 judges of the N. Y. sessions.
- 1 police justice in Lockport.
- 5 commissioners of charitable institutions.
- 1 secretary to said commissioners.
- 2 supreme court commissioners.
- 1 southern railroad inspector.
- 2 northern railroad commissioners.

- 3 fire commissioners.
- 25 (at least) commissioners of deeds in other States.
- 2 Helderberg commissioners.
- 50 police officers in the city of New York.
- 1 inspector of unslacked lime, Wash. co.
- 1 do distilled spirits, Albany.
- 1 police justice, Syracuse.
- 5 additional trustees of the Seaman's Hospital.
- 1 physician in chief for do.
- 3 commissioners to gerrymander New York city.
- 201 additional inspectors of election, New York.
- 1 inspector of sole leather.
- 1 do quercitron bark.
- 1 do flour.
- 1 do potatoes.
- 1 harbor master for New York.
- 2 port wardens do.
- 2 State prison keepers.

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Such is the contrast presented between the professions of Federalism out of power, and the practice of Federalism in power. The facts carry their comment along with them.

It is almost useless to say I voted against the bill that was rejected in the House on the 20th of May last, as I wished to preserve the freedom of speech, and of the press, which is, as Mr. Madison says, "the guardian of all our other rights."

I am satisfied you will think with me, that the measures and policy above alluded to, which were attempted to be established in Congress, and made the law of the land, are substantially the same as the alien and sedition laws; and as the principles are the same, the parties must also be the same. For two parties to exist separate and distinct, when both are engaged in carrying out the same measures and principles, is impossible. These measures are submitted to you for your serious consideration. It is for you to say if you approve of the policy and principles of the "alien and sedition" laws; and if these new measures are not substantially the same in principle.

Your friend,

JOHN REYNOLDS.

WASHINGTON CITY, June 25, 1840.

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